

What is Positive Youth Development (PYD):

The Arizona Positive Youth Development Initiative (AzPYD) works to promote a positive youth development framework for all grant activities. This approach, which is asset-based rather than problem-focused, is intended for policy and program developers, program managers, youth services professionals, and others who care about young people. It intends to enhance capacity to develop service models and approaches that direct youth toward positive pathways of development. The positive youth development approach is predicated on the understanding that all young people need support, guidance, and opportunities during adolescence - a time of rapid growth and change. With this support, they can develop self-assurance and create a healthy, successful life.

Key elements of positive youth development are:

- Healthy messages to adolescents about their bodies, their behaviors, and their interactions.
- Safe and structured places for teens to study, recreate, and socialize.
- Strengthened relationships with adult role models, such as parents, mentors, coaches, or community leaders.
- Skill development in literacy, competence, work readiness, and social skills.
- Opportunities to serve others and build self-esteem.

If these factors are being addressed, young people can become not just problem free but fully prepared and engaged constructively in their communities and society. Positive developmental opportunities should be available to all young people during adolescence. Adolescents need opportunities to fulfill their developmental needs - intellectually, psychologically, socially, morally and ethically. Youth benefit from experiential learning and they need to belong to a group while maintaining their individuality. At the same time, they want and need support from caring adults. They also need opportunities to express opinions, challenge adult assumptions, develop the ability to make appropriate choices, and learn to use new skills, including leadership.

For additional resources on Positive Youth Development, please see the following publications:

- Understanding Youth Development: Promoting Positive Pathways of Growth
- The National Youth Summit: Summit Themes and A Strategy for Action
- Reconnecting Youth and Community: A Youth Development Approach
- Toward A Blueprint For Youth: Making Positive Youth Development A National Priority

These resources and more are available from the National Clearinghouse on Families and Youth at: (301-608-8098); <http://www.ncfy.com> or <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/fysb>.

For more information, contact:

Regeanna N.J. Mwansa
Youth Development Program Administrator
Office of Governor Janet Napolitano
Governor's Division for Community and Youth Development
State Capitol, Executive Tower
1700 W. Washington Street, Suite 101
Phoenix, AZ 85007
Email: rmwansa@az.gov
Phone: 602-364-2241
Fax: 602-542-3423

